

to me that the Republican Senate leadership is devoting this week to divisive cloture votes on controversial nominations. Why they choose to sow division rather than make progress on matters that could improve the lives of so many Americans across the country is for others to explain.

Criticism of this "do-nothing" Congress is becoming universal. Conservative writers who are more prone to promote the Republican agenda than criticize its leadership have even joined in the chorus. Maybe that explains this misguided exercise, maybe it is reaction to all the criticism and an effort to shore up the extreme right-wing of Republican support. I do not know.

I fear more and more that some want the Senate to become a wholly-owned subsidiary of this Presidency and the Federal courts to become an arm of the Republican Party. That is wrong, that is unwise, that is unsound. The American people need to say no and preserve this great democracy.

Rather than doing the people's business, the Senate is being forced into contrived stunts for partisan political purposes. I urge the Republican leadership to use the upcoming recess to learn about the Senate and its role in our Federal Government. Maybe read Master of the Senate, the extraordinary and award winning book by Robert Caro, or the Constitution of the United States.

The American people deserve better. The Senate deserves better. Senator BYRD has spoken to this situation. Senator DASCHLE, Senator REID and all Democratic Senators have demonstrated over and over again our good faith and commitment to moving forward. Let us all, Republicans and Democrats, come back from the upcoming hiatus in our Senate proceedings with a commitment to find the common ground that Senator DASCHLE spoke about so well last month in the interests of the American people.

OUR MIDEAST POLICY

Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, I recently wrote a column on Mideast Policy for the Post and Courier in Charleston, SC. I want to share it with my colleagues and ask unanimous consent the July 9 article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Now We Know: It's Our Mideast Policy
That's Creating Enemies
(By Ernest F. Hollings)

Now we know: (A) That there are no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. (B) There was no al-Qaida in Iraq on 9/11. (C) From 1993 until we attacked in 2003—for 10 years—there was no terrorism by Saddam against the United States. (D) Saddam was not involved in the 9/11 attack on the United States. (E) Mideast people are generally of the Islam religion and tribal in culture. The Islam religion is strong—those who don't adhere are considered infidels. (F) Mideast countries don't yearn for democracy—Kuwait, liber-

ated from Saddam, didn't opt for democracy. (G) In "A World Transformed," President "Papa" Bush warned, "We should not march into Baghdad . . . turning the whole Arab world against us . . . assigning young soldiers . . . to fight in what would be an unwinnable urban guerrilla war." (H) We went into Baghdad anyway. (I) As the CIA author of "Imperial Hubris" wrote, "There is nothing that bin Laden could have hoped for more than the invasion and occupation of Iraq." (J) Now we are the infidel. Our invasion has turned Iraq into a shooting gallery and a recruitment center for al-Qaida. (K) The majority of the Iraqi people want us gone. (L) Even with Saddam out, many feel it wasn't worth the lives of 900 killed, 5,000 maimed for life and \$200 billion. (M) Now most people of the United States think the invasion of Iraq was a mistake.

1. We also know that: (A) Terrorism did not start on 9/11. Terrorism has been going on in Northern Ireland for 35 years. Terrorism now persists between India and Pakistan and between the Kurds and the Turks. (B) Terrorism is not a war but a weapon. We don't call World War II the Blitzkrieg War or the Battle of the Light Brigade the Cavalry War. (C) Terrorism against the United States is based on our policy in the Mideast. Osama bin Laden hit us because of our presence in Saudi Arabia and policy in Israel/Palestine. (D) Everyone knows that Israel is a U.S. commitment. (E) We have maintained this commitment for 37 years with an evenhanded policy between the Israelis and the Palestinians. (F) But President Bush changed the policy of negotiations, confirming Israeli settlements, and invading Iraq to secure Israel by democratizing the Mideast. (G) U.S. News & World Report and others keep parroting that terrorists hit us "because of our values" and hate us "because of who we are." Not so! It is our Mideast policy they oppose.

The way to win the "war on terrorism" is to (1) Seek out al-Qaida and the Taliban and eliminate them. (2) Secure Iraq so that democracy can work. (3) Publicly renounce pre-emptive war. (4) Rather than invasion, use capitalism to spread democracy, which is now working in China. (5) Return to the evenhanded policy of negotiations with Israel and Palestine. (6) Start rebuilding both Israel and Palestine.

Everyone laments our predicament after just one year's occupation of Iraq. Imagine 37 years' occupation of Palestine. Anyone with get up and go has gotten up and gone. Palestine is left with the hopeless and embittered. There is no leadership, hardly anything to lead. But embittered refugees from without lead with terrorism. A Palestinian state must first be built in order to be recognized. It can't be built while homes are bulldozed, settlements extended and walls are constructed. Our hypocrisy is obvious. We hail President Reagan for saying, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall," but now we say, "Mr. Sharon, put up this wall." There are 1 million Arabs in Israel's population of 6 million. For years the people of Israel and Palestine were learning to live together. The Arab soccer team just won the national championship of Israel. But the young of Israel and Palestine are now learning to kill together rather than to live together. This is creating terrorists big time, long term.

People the world around respect America for its stand for freedom and individual rights. It's time to stop this wag of people "hating us" and against us "because of our values." It's not our values or people, but our Mideast policy they oppose. We need to return to evenhandedness and active negotiations in the Mideast. Then we can begin to win the "war on terrorism" and regain our moral authority in the world.

ATTEMPTS TO OBTAIN ADMINISTRATION MEMORANDUMS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as we go out of session for the long recess at the end of this week, I am disappointed to report that Congress seems content to let the issue of foreign prisoner abuse linger without effective congressional oversight.

The House Armed Services Committee made it clear weeks ago that it believed the ongoing military investigations into the abuses were sufficient. Until today, the Senate Armed Services Committee had not held a hearing on the prisoner abuse issue in more than a month. Chairman WARNER called a hearing this morning to hear a report on one of the investigations: an assessment of Army detention operation doctrine and training, completed by the Army Inspector General.

Waiting for the administration to investigate itself is not the answer. There are at least four completed and seven ongoing military reviews into the treatment of prisoners held in detention facilities in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Guantanamo Bay. While these reviews are necessary, they fail to address critical issues: What role did White House officials, the Justice Department and other agencies play in developing the policies that allowed these abuses to occur? The military investigations may uncover what went wrong at the bottom of the chain of command, but it will take aggressive congressional oversight to discover what went wrong at the top of the chain.

We need to get to the bottom of this scandal, but we also need to get to the top of it. Only by doing that can we responsibly put it behind us and repair the damage it threatens to our security, to our credibility and to the safety of our troops.

Numerous attempts in Congress to uncover the truth have failed because Republicans have circled the wagons and refused to support oversight efforts. In the past week, Democratic members of the House introduced resolutions requiring the Secretary of State and the Attorney General to turn over all documents related to the treatment of prisoners in Iraq, Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay. The resolutions failed on straight party-line votes, first on July 15 in the House International Relations Committee, and yesterday in the House Judiciary Committee.

Democratic members of the Senate Judiciary Committee tried to make progress as long ago as June 17, 2004, but the Committee, on a party-line vote, rejected a subpoena resolution for documents relating to the interrogation and treatment of detainees. Since that date, no action has been taken by the Senate Judiciary Committee, despite the clear need to resolve these issues.

In the June 17 Committee meeting, and in subsequent days on the Senate Floor, several Senators said that we

should give the administration more time to respond to inquiries, even though some of us had been asking for information for more than a year. Questions were submitted to the Attorney General on June 15, following his appearance before the Committee a week earlier. In the June 8 hearing, the Attorney General refused to provide information and essentially demanded that the Committee issue a subpoena for the requested materials.

On June 17, Democratic Judiciary Committee members were urged to withhold a subpoena and to give the Attorney General until the end of the month to respond. At that time, Chairman HATCH said he believed the administration should comply; he said that it was "the right thing to do." He said that if the administration did not respond by the end of June, then "I may very well vote for a subpoena at that time." That same day, Senator DEWINE said, "I think the administration has to [clarify the policy] and has to release the information that will clarify that." Senator SPECTER said, "I believe that this committee ought to know what the interrogation practices are and I am prepared to pursue them." But all in all, the Republicans asked us to give the Department more time, to wait for the Attorney General to answer our questions.

And then, the Attorney General—through an aide—on July 1, again thumbed his nose at his obligations to the Committee of jurisdiction over the Department of Justice. He refused to provide a comprehensive set of answers to questions submitted by the nine Democratic members of this Committee, he refused to provide almost all of the documents that were requested, and, again, he refused even to provide an index of the documents being withheld. Because of the continued stonewalling by the administration, Congress and its committees of jurisdiction over the Department of Justice remain largely in the dark about these pertinent matters.

Other Senate committees have faced similar obstacles, even when there have been bipartisan requests for information. The Pentagon played games with the Senate Armed Services Committee for seven weeks before showing members the reports on treatment of prisoners in Iraq produced by the International Committee of the Red Cross, ICRC. While such reports are generally not released, the ICRC agreed early on that members of Congress should have access to them on a confidential basis. Members of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees were first shown ICRC reports on Iraq last Wednesday, July 14, after having requested them in early June.

Access to these reports was extremely limited, causing some Members of the House Armed Services Committee to complain that the information was stale and that Pentagon briefers were unable to shed light on the abuses. It is puzzling that Members

of Congress—and specifically Members of the committees of jurisdiction—should be treated so incidentally.

The ICRC reports did make an important contribution, however. They apparently confirm that U.S. officials should have been alerted to the prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib prison months before the Pentagon announced an investigation on January 16, 2004, and before General Taguba was assigned to lead this inquiry on January 31, 2004. According to House members, the ICRC reports alleged serious abuses at Abu Ghraib last fall, a time period that coincides with the point at which U.S. military intelligence reportedly took control of certain cellblocks of Abu Ghraib. In addition to the ICRC reports, the New York Times has reported that in November 2003, a small group of interrogators at Abu Ghraib began sharing allegations of prisoner abuse with senior officers. It is hard to comprehend the administration's apparent failure to respond to the ICRC and to internal military reports of abuse for weeks or months in late fall and early winter.

Some individuals who committed abusive acts are being punished, as they must be. But this issue runs much deeper. What of those who gave the orders, set the tone, or looked the other way? What of the White House and Pentagon lawyers who tried to justify the use of torture in their legal arguments? The White House has now disavowed the analysis contained in the August 1, 2002, Office of Legal Counsel memorandum. That memo, which was sent to the White House Counsel, argued that for acts to rise to the level of torture, they must go on for months or even years, or be so severe as to generate the type of pain that would result from organ failure or even death. The White House and the Department of Justice now call that memo "irrelevant" and "unnecessary" and say that DOJ will spend weeks rewriting its analysis.

A troubling editorial in the July 15 Washington Post charges that several detainees in secret CIA custody have probably been tortured, and that the August 1, 2002, memo was written after those acts occurred in order to justify the acts as legal.

Meanwhile, we continue to hear of more documents. The Department of Justice admitted in the July 1 letter to the Judiciary Committee that it had "given specific advice concerning specific interrogation practices," but would not disclose such advice to members of the Committee, who are duly elected representatives of the people of the United States, as well as members of the committee of oversight for the Department of Justice. USA Today reported on June 28 that the Justice Department issued a memo in August 2002 that "specifically authorized the CIA to use 'waterboarding,'" an interrogation technique that is designed to make a prisoner believe he is suffocating. This memo is reportedly classi-

fied and has not been released. According to USA Today: "Initially, the Office of Legal Counsel was assigned the task of approving specific interrogation techniques, but high-ranking Justice Department officials intercepted the CIA request, and the matter was handled by top officials in the Deputy Attorney General's office and Justice's Criminal Division."

While former administration officials grant press interviews and write opinion articles denying wrongdoing, and the White House and Justice Department hold closed briefings for the media to disavow the reasoning of this previously relied upon memoranda and to characterize what happened, Senators of the United States are denied basic information and access to the facts. I would hope that the significance of such unilateralism and arrogance shown to the Congress and to its oversight committees will register with each and every Member of this body.

These memos, which may have governed official action for nearly two years, are of particular concern because so much of what is happening in detention centers remains hidden. In addition to Abu Ghraib in Iraq, Bagram in Afghanistan, and Guantanamo Bay, several shadowy detention centers are operated by the intelligence agencies or possibly the military, some under total secrecy. A report on secret detentions was released on June 17, 2004, by Human Rights First, a non-profit research and advocacy organization formerly called the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights. This report raises many important questions on the issue of foreign prisons. I will ask unanimous consent that the introduction be printed in the RECORD. The report, *Ending Secret Detentions*, describes a number of officially undisclosed locations that sources—typically unnamed government sources quoted in the press—have described as detention centers for terrorism suspects. These sources have discussed facilities in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Jordan, Diego Garcia, and on U.S. war ships. The ICRC has not been allowed to visit these facilities. It issued a public statement in March expressing its growing concern over "the fate of an unknown number of people captured . . . and held in undisclosed locations." To date, its requests for access to the prisons have been denied.

In Iraq, where the Bush administration claims to be following the Geneva Conventions, Human Rights First states that it is unclear if the ICRC has access to all detention facilities in the country. Even if it did, the Secretary of State admitted in June that he had approved requests to hide certain detainees from the International Red Cross.

And what of the secret detention centers? Have these facilities been managed by officials operating under the legal analysis contained in DOJ memos that argue for a very narrow reading of

the prohibition on torture? Have they been managed by officials acting in accordance with the President's determination that al-Qaeda and Taliban suspects are not protected by the Geneva Conventions? What is the legal status of these individuals? Even in Iraq, where, as I just mentioned, the administration claims to be applying the Geneva Conventions, there is a great deal of ambiguity. The Human Rights First report describes new categories of prisoners in Iraq, including "security detainees," "high value detainees," and a group of prisoners whose status the Coalition Provisional Authority declined to discuss. These are not categories of prisoners defined in the Geneva Conventions, and without full access given the ICRC, no one can verify the circumstances under which they are being held and interrogated.

The administration can provide a significant amount of information about its practices in handling foreign detainees without jeopardizing national security and while still protecting sensitive information. This should include relevant facts about detention centers, and an accounting of the number of detainees, their nationality, and the legal authority under which each is held. I also restate my longstanding request for the documents produced by the White House, the Justice Department, the Pentagon and other agencies that form the legal basis for this Administration's treatment and interrogation of foreign prisoners.

With his words, President Bush says he wants the whole truth, but with his actions he and his administration instead have cynically blocked the doors that lead to the answers. The American people and the American troops who are put at risk by these policies and abuses need and deserve to understand how this happened, and they need to know it will not happen again. For the sake of our national security interests and our credibility, we need to show the world the right way that a democratic society corrects its mistakes. Thwarting adequate oversight and avoiding accountability will not make this problem go away, it will compound it.

I ask unanimous consent the report to which I referred be printed in the RECORD.

(There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:)

[From Human Rights First, June 2004]

ENDING SECRET DETENTIONS

(By Michael Posner and Deborah Pearlstein)

I. INTRODUCTION

More than 3,000 suspected terrorists have been arrested in many countries. Many others have met a different fate. Put it this way, they're no longer a problem to the United States and our friends and allies. (President George W. Bush, State of the Union Address, February 4, 2003)

In April, the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments in the cases of Jose Padilla and Yaser Hamdi—both U.S. citizens who have been held in military detention facilities for more than two years. One justice

wondered aloud how the Court could be sure that government interrogators were not abusing these detainees. You just have to "trust the executive to make the kind of quintessential military judgments that are involved in things like that," said Deputy Solicitor General Paul Clement. Later that evening, CBS's 60 Minutes broadcast the first shocking photographs of U.S. troops torturing Iraqi prisoners at the Abu Ghraib detention center in Iraq.

The photos from Abu Ghraib have made a policy of "trust us" obsolete. But they are only the most visible symptoms of a much larger and more disturbing systemic illness. Since the attacks of September 11, the United States has established a network of detention facilities around the world used to detain thousands of individuals captured in the "war on terrorism." Information about this system—particularly the location of U.S. detention facilities, how many are held within them, on what legal basis they are held, and who has access to the prisoners—emerges in a piecemeal way, if at all, and then largely as a result of the work of investigative reporters and other non-governmental sources. The official secrecy surrounding U.S. practices has made conditions ripe for illegality and abuse.

Several of these facilities, including the U.S. military bases at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and at Bagram Air Force Base in Afghanistan, are well known. The existence of these facilities—and the fact of unlawful conduct within them—have been widely publicized and well documented. Nonetheless, there is still no or only conflicting information about how many individuals are held there, troubling information about inadequate provision of notice to families about the fact of detainees' capture and condition, and unclear or conflicting statements about detainees' legal status and rights. While the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has visited these facilities, their visits have been undermined in ways contrary to the letter and spirit of binding law.

In addition, there are detention facilities that multiple sources have reported are maintained by the United States in various officially undisclosed locations, including facilities in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Jordan, on the British possession of Diego Garcia, and on U.S. war ships at sea. U.S. Government officials have alluded to detention facilities in undisclosed locations, declining to deny their existence or refusing to comment on reports of their existence.³ A Department of Defense official told Human Rights First in June 2004 that while Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo's Camp Echo were open to discussion, "as a matter of policy, we don't comment on other facilities."⁴ Similarly, Captain Bruce Frame, a U.S. army spokesman from CENTCOM, the unified military command that covers Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia, told Human Rights First only that there "may or may not" be detention centers in countries other than Iraq and Afghanistan in CENTCOM's area of responsibility.⁵

THE KNOWN UNKNOWN

What is unknown about this detention system still outweighs what is known about it. But facilities within it share in common key features that—while having unclear benefits in the nation's struggle against terrorism—make inappropriate detention and abuse not only likely, but virtually inevitable.

First, each of these facilities is maintained in either partial or total secrecy. For the past half-century, the United States has considered itself bound by international treaties and U.S. military regulations that prohibit such blanket operating secrecy. Yet in this conflict, the ICRC—which the United States

has long respected as a positive force in upholding international humanitarian law—has repeatedly sought and been denied access to these facilities.⁶ As the ICRC recently noted in a public statement:

Beyond Bagram and Guantanamo Bay, the ICRC is increasingly concerned about the fate of an unknown number of people captured as part of the so-called global war on terror and held in undisclosed locations. For the ICRC, obtaining information on these detainees and access to them is an important humanitarian priority and a logical continuation of its current detention work in Bagram and Guantanamo Bay.⁷

Indeed, Human Rights First has been unable to identify any official list of U.S. detention facilities abroad employed in the course of the "war on terrorism." There is likewise no public accounting of how many are detained or for what reason they are held. And there has been a disturbing absence of serious congressional oversight of both known and undisclosed detention facilities.⁸

Second, these facilities have thrived in an environment in which the highest levels of U.S. civilian leadership have sought legal opinions aimed at circumventing the application of domestic and international rules governing arrest and detention. Where it would have once seemed crystal clear to military commanders and on-the-ground military custodians alike that the Geneva Conventions governed the arrest and detention of individuals caught up in the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, this Administration has challenged the applicability of those rules. In several recently leaked legal opinions from White House Counsel, and the Departments of Defense and Justice, it has become clear that some in the Administration have given a green light to the wholesale violation of these rules.⁹

As a result, it remains unclear what legal status has been assigned to those being detained at these U.S.-controlled facilities. Are they prisoners of war, civilians who took a direct part in hostilities (who the Administration calls "unlawful combatants"), or are they suspected of criminal violations under civilian law? The Administration has applied no clear system for defining their status. It also is unclear under many circumstances which U.S. agency is ultimately responsible for their arrest or the conditions of their confinement. And it now seems that U.S. military and intelligence agencies are involved in their interrogation, as well as civilian or foreign government contractors to whom aspects of detention and interrogation has been outsourced. It is likewise unclear to whom a family member or legal representative can appeal to challenge the basis for their continued detention.

Finally, the U.S. government has failed to provide prompt notice to families of those captured that their family member is in custody, much less information about their health or whereabouts. In such cases, the families of individuals removed to such unknown locations have had no opportunity to challenge detentions that may continue for extended periods.¹⁰ For example, Saifullah Paracha, according to information his family received from the ICRC, has been detained at Bagram Air Force Base for more than 11 months. His wife and children remain in the dark, not only of the reason for his detention, but also when they can expect Mr. Paracha to be released or tried.¹¹ Other individuals captured more than a year ago remain in detention at other undisclosed locations.¹² The lack of information to family members about these detainees violates U.S. legal obligations and sets a negative precedent for treatment that may be directed at U.S. soldiers in the future. It also engenders

great anguish and suffering on the part of the families of detainees—no less than did the practice of “forcible disappearance” in past decades—while engendering enormous hostility toward the United States.

IN THE INTEREST OF NATIONAL SECURITY

The Administration has argued that, faced with the unprecedented security threat posed by terrorist groups “of global reach,”¹³ it has had to resort to preventive detention and interrogation of those suspected to have information about possible terrorist attacks. According to the Defense and Justice Departments, a key purpose of these indefinite detentions is to promote national security by developing detainees as sources of intelligence. And while much of what goes on at these detention facilities is steeped in secrecy, intelligence agents insist that “[w]e’re getting great info almost every day.”¹⁴

Whatever the value of intelligence information obtained in these facilities—and there is reason to doubt the reliability of intelligence information gained only in the course of prolonged incommunicado detention¹⁵—there is no legal or practical justification for refusing to report comprehensively on the number and location of these detainees—or to fail to provide the identities of detainees to the ICRC, detainees’ families, their counsel, or to others having a legitimate interest in the information (unless a wish to the contrary has been manifested by the persons concerned).

The United States is of course within its power to ask questions and to cultivate local sources of information. And the United States certainly has the power to detain—in keeping with its authority under the Constitution and applicable international law—those who are actively engaged in hostilities against the United States, or those suspected of committing or conspiring to commit acts against the law. But it does not have the power to establish a secret system of off-shore prisons beyond the reach of supervision, accountability, or law.

Finally, even if some valuable information is being obtained, there are standards on the treatment of prisoners that cannot be set aside. The United States was founded on a core set of beliefs that have served the nation very well over two centuries. Among the most basic of these beliefs is that torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment is wrong; arbitrary detention is an instrument of tyranny; and no use of government power should go unchecked. The refusal to disclose the identity of detainees, prolonged incommunicado detention, the use of secret detention centers, and the exclusion of judicial or ICRC oversight combine to remove fundamental safeguards against torture and ill-treatment and arbitrary detention. Current practices which violate these principles must be stopped immediately.

The abuses at Abu Ghraib underscore the reason why, since the United States’ founding, Americans have rejected the idea of a government left to its own devices and acting on good faith in favor of a government based on checks and balances and anchored to the rule of law. As James Madison noted, “[a] popular Government without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a Prologue to a Farce or Tragedy.”¹⁶ This nation’s history has repeatedly taught the value of public debate and discourse. To cite one example, the United States learned this 30 years ago when a series of congressional investigations uncovered widespread, secret domestic spying by the CIA, NSA, FBI, and the Army—revelations whose impact on the intelligence agencies was, in former CIA Director Stansfield Turner’s words, “devastating.”¹⁷

We should be clear—the United States has important and legitimate interests in gathering intelligence information and in keeping some of this information secret. But we are not demanding the public release of any information that would compromise these interests. What we are calling for is an official accounting—to Congress and to the ICRC—of the number, nationality, legal status, and place of detention of all those the United States currently holds. We ask that all of these places of detention be acknowledged and open to inspection by the ICRC, and that the names of all detainees be made available promptly to the ICRC and to others with a legitimate interest in this information. Neither logic nor law supports the continued withholding of the most basic information about the United States’ global system of secret detention. Trust is plainly no longer enough.

RETIREMENT OF VICE ADMIRAL GORDON S. HOLDER, UNITED STATES NAVY

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize a great patriot, sailor and fellow Floridian, VADM Gordon S. Holder. Vice Admiral Holder is retiring after a distinguished 36-year career in the United States Navy.

Gordon Holder entered naval service in 1968 after graduating from Florida State University in Tallahassee and completion of the Officer Candidate School in Newport RI. Since then he has served with distinction in peace and war in a variety of command and staff positions on shore and at sea.

Vice Admiral Holder’s illustrious career includes sea duty on the USS *William C. Lawe* (DD 763) as First Lieutenant and Combat Information Center Officer, USS *Brumby* (DE 1044) as Operations Officer, USS *Boulder* (LST 1190) as Chief Engineer, and USS *Hermitage* (LSD 34) as Executive Officer. His first command at sea was USS *Inflict* (MSO 456), with subsequent commanding officer afloat tours in USS *Whidbey Island* (LSD 41) and USS *Austin* (LPD 4). He has also served staff tours with Commander Seventh Fleet and Commander Naval Forces, U.S. Central Command as Fleet Exercises and Amphibious Warfare Officer, and with Amphibious Group Two as Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans.

Shore tours include Aide to the Commandant Sixth Naval District and Commander Naval Base Charleston, Company Officer and Special Assistant to the Commandant, U.S. Naval Academy, and Assistant Surface Commander Assignments Officer, Naval Military Personnel Command. In 1980, Vice Admiral Holder graduated with distinction from the Air Command and Staff College at Air University, Montgomery, AL.

Vice Admiral Holder was selected for promotion to flag rank in December 1993 and has served as Commander Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific and Commander Naval Base Pearl Harbor, Commander Naval Doctrine Command, Commander Amphibious Group Two, and Commander, Military Sealift Command.

Vice Admiral Holder assumed his current duties as Director for Logistics on the Joint Staff on September 4, 2001 just one week prior to the fateful attacks on U.S. soil. In this capacity he has worked tirelessly and with great success to plan, organize and direct the massive logistics effort of the nation in support of our Armed Forces in the global war on terrorism, including successful combat operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. At the same time, he has been instrumental in guiding the transformation of military logistics to a true 21st century structure that links industry, supply, transportation, maintenance and management systems capable of supporting our forces around the globe. Vice Admiral Holder has had direct and far-reaching influence on numerous policies, programs and operations that support our soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines, including, most notably the rotation of forces in Operation Iraqi Freedom, the largest movement of American forces since World War II.

I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Vice Admiral Holder for the leadership he has provided, for the care and concern he has demonstrated for our service members and their families and for his dedicated and honorable service to our Nation and Navy. As he turns to retired life, we wish him, his wife Pat and family Godspeed and all the best in the future.

NATIONAL HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION ACT

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I would like to rise today to talk for a few minutes about a bill I am cosponsoring, the National Health Information Technology Adoption Act, S. 2710. This bill, introduced yesterday by Senator GREGG, chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, takes an important step forward in bringing our Nation’s medical system into the 21st century.

In today’s society, it seems that almost everything is computerized and on-line. You can pay your bills on-line, order your groceries on-line, and even file your taxes on-line. However, for the most part, medical records are still on paper and in files. This means these records are uneasily shared between doctors treating the same patient or are not readily available during an emergency.

Earlier this year, the Bush administration made computerizing the Nation’s medical record and building a nationwide health network a priority. Yesterday, Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson released a 10-year plan for doing just that.

S. 2710 is similar to the administration’s plan and takes some immediate steps to start fulfilling this goal, including establishing an official office at the Department of Health and Human Services to coordinate health information technology at the national level. The bill also provides assistance